First, they covered it up. Now it seems like they are covering up the cover-up

When Leaders Tell You Not to Ask, Ask Louder
by Jeff Pierson

July 2025

In 2013, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stood before Congress and uttered the now-infamous phrase: “What difference, at this point, does it make?” She was responding to pointed questions about the cause of the 2012 Benghazi attack, where four Americans, including Ambassador Chris Stevens, were killed. Her tone was sharp, impatient, and dismissive.

To her defenders, Clinton was pivoting toward solutions, urging focus on preventing future loss of life rather than dissecting past events. But to millions of Americans, her words were a quiet confession that truth had become politically expendable.
That moment did not mark the end of accountability. It marked the beginning of its erosion.

Fast forward a decade, and we find ourselves hearing a new version of the same tactic. This time, from Donald Trump: “Are you still asking about Epstein?”

It is the same rhetorical poison in a different bottle. Where Clinton appealed to emotional fatigue, Trump relies on mockery. Where she cast the truth as irrelevant, he casts it as outdated. Both reveal something far more troubling than personal style. They reveal that for many in power, truth is no longer the goal. Controlling the narrative is.

Dismissing legitimate questions about Jeffrey Epstein, his death, his network, and his access to the most powerful people in the world is not just irresponsible. It is calculated. It is intended to suppress further inquiry, belittle public concern, and discourage anyone from pushing too hard.

These rhetorical maneuvers function on several levels:
Evasion through ridicule, framing continued interest as obsessive or unserious.

Implied moral fatigue, suggesting the public has already moved on and further inquiry is unnecessary.

Elitist solidarity, sending a message that everyone important knows this is not a topic to

Jeff Pierson

touch.

When someone says, “Are you still asking about Epstein?” they are not just brushing you off. They are warning you. You are not supposed to ask. You are not supposed to care. You are supposed to forget.

But free societies do not run on forgetting. They run on remembering. They depend on vigilance.
Both Clinton’s and Trump’s comments reflect a deeper bipartisan failure. The message from both sides is the same: stop asking questions that threaten our status, our secrets, and our power. It is a message of fear disguised as indifference.

The American people have every right, and every obligation, to keep asking. The moment we stop is the moment the cover-up succeeds.

Truth does not have a deadline. And justice does not become invalid just because it makes the powerful uncomfortable.

So yes, we are still asking. About Epstein. About every incident we have ever been told to let go.

The possibility of an Epstein cover-up is troubling, but not as alarming as the possibility of a cover-up of the cover-up. That is where the deeper rot lies.

We hired Trump. We supported him. Many of us still want to believe the fight was genuine. But the body language, the shifts in tone, the vague messaging, and the plain, uncomfortable facts are now forcing honest MAGA supporters to reckon with something harder than betrayal: disappointment. MAGA is used to betrayal and lies from the government. But we invested more than money in the Trump administration. We invested hope.

Perhaps it is only a failure in strategy. But the lack of awareness, the incoherent posture, and the absence of any credible cleanup effort suggest something else. Something worse. Something we were never meant to see.

Jeff Pierson

About the Author

Jeff Pierson is a researcher, writer, and civic commentator focused on political rhetoric, institutional trust, and the limits of public accountability in the modern American republic. His work often explores the intersection of historical precedent, media manipulation, and citizen responsibility in the face of elite narrative control.

Disclaimer

This opinion essay represents the personal views of the author and is intended for civic commentary and political analysis. It does not accuse any individual or administration of criminal conduct without legal evidence. The references to public statements and events are used to explore rhetorical and cultural trends. Readers are encouraged to verify all facts independently and engage critically with the material presented.

Keywords

Jeffrey Epstein, Epstein cover-up, cover-up of the cover-up, Hillary Clinton, Benghazi hearings, “What difference does it make,” Donald Trump, “Are you still asking about Epstein,” political accountability, rhetorical deflection, MAGA movement, Trump administration, Pam Bondi, Kash Patel, Dan Bongino, public trust erosion, bipartisan corruption, elite protection, narrative control, citizen vigilance, media suppression

---

Description

This op-ed examines the growing public frustration with bipartisan evasion of accountability, using two pivotal moments as case studies: Hillary Clinton's dismissal of Benghazi inquiries in 2013, and Donald Trump's recent rhetorical dismissal of Epstein-related questions. The author argues that these moments reflect a deeper cultural illness—one in which truth is increasingly treated as disposable and questioning authority is actively discouraged. Special attention is given to the emotional and rhetorical shift among MAGA-aligned citizens, many of whom are beginning to experience not betrayal, but profound disappointment in those they once trusted.

Jeff Pierson